

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW MITE BELONGING TO THE
GENUS *HETEROPUS*, FOUND IN WASPS' NESTS.

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When examining the contents of the nests of *Alastor eriurgus*, Sauss., obtained in the neighbourhood of Sydney, I have on several occasions, while breaking up the clay cells, found numbers containing dead pupæ, which, upon close examination, were found to be covered with small globular yellow excrescences, varying from the size of a pin's point to the size of small shot. Upon first noticing these I took them to be grease or some fatty exudation from the insect, but upon placing them under the lens I was astonished to see that these globular bodies had legs and heads attached to them, which were constantly moving from side to side; the globular portion in fact being the distended abdomen of the gravid female of some minute carnivorous mite. Besides the mites attached to dead pupæ, there were numbers scattered all over the walls of the cell from which they were taken, and among them I noticed several of very different form, which I took to be males, though they might possibly be unimpregnated females. Two species of these Acari are known from the nests of bees. Mr. G. Newport (Trans. Linn. Soc. Vol. xxi. tab. 10, p. 95, 1850) described a species he had discovered in the nests of *Anthophora retusa* feeding upon the larvæ; he placed it in the family *Sarcopitides*, forming for its reception the genus *Heteropus*, giving it the specific name of *H. ventricosus*. Newport also says that in the genus *Trichodactylus*, Dufour, the mites are found in the nests of the mason bees (*Osmia*).

In the Bulletin Soc. Ent. France, 1868, Lichtenstein described a somewhat similar mite under the name of *Physogaster larvarum*.

HETEROPUS ALASTORIS, n.sp.

♀. Head rounded, coming to an obtuse point at the tip; thorax broadest and swelling out in the centre, constricted at the junction with the abdomen, marked with parallel wavy lines running into the abdomen; legs of about equal length, hairy; the whole insect pale yellow, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a line in length; abdomen globular and semi-transparent, the lower half milky white, eight times the length of the head and thorax combined.

♂. Very much more elongate, with the head rounded in front; abdomen narrow, of uniform width from the shoulders towards the apex, which is rounded.

Hab.—Granville, Sydney; in the nest of *Alastor eriurgus*, Sauss.